

Use Utah Travel Council's On-Line Lodging Database

In order to provide a more complete list of lodging facilities available in Utah, our Web site now provides travelers a link to the Utah Travel Council's on-line lodging database. The on-line list allows you to search for hotels by city or by area of the state and provides complete, detailed information about each facility.

The link to the lodging database and a list of per diem rates for specific Utah cities are posted on our Web site at www.finance.utah.gov/travel/hotels.htm.

To make hotel reservations, you must call the hotel directly and request State of Utah per diem rates. Not all hotels in the Travel Council's list offer lodging at our per diem rates. Please note that per diem rates cannot be booked over the Internet.

You can access the Utah Travel Council's on-line lodging database directly at www.utah.com/database/lodging/. Agencies that prefer a hard copy hotel listing, may order a free copy of the Utah Accommodations Guide compiled by the Utah Hotel and Lodging Association at www.utahhotel-lodging.com. ➔

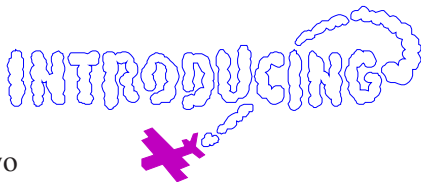


Welcome Two New Voices to the State Travel Office

Dallas Stewart

Welcome to Dallas Stewart, the newest agent in the State Travel Office. In addition to working in State Travel, Dallas is finishing up a Bachelor's degree in Parks Recreation and Tourism at the University of Utah. She has completed a year of Travel School at Salt Lake Community College and has worked in the travel industry for four years. Dallas, who has been married for two years, grew up in the Riverton/Herriman area.

You may contact Dallas by phone at 801-538-3743 or by e-mail at dstewart@utah.gov.



Charlene Snyder

Another new voice you may occasionally hear in State Travel belongs to Charlene Snyder. She works in our office when our agents are ill or on vacation.

You can feel confident that Charlene, who has worked in the travel industry since 1982, will deliver the same high level of service as our other agents. She has been trained to work in our office and is as knowledgeable of our state accounts as the other agents. ➔

Federal Government Reinstates Airline Security Tax

The federal government has reinstated the \$2.50 per flight segment security tax. The tax was temporarily suspended in June to stimulate travel and help airlines recover economically.

According to *Business Travel News*, the airlines have announced that they will not officially raise published fares but will pass the fee on to passengers as a separate item in addition to the ticket price, effectively raising fares.

Unlike other airline taxes and fees that go mostly to the Federal Aviation Administration and local airports, this tax finances Transportation Security Administration initiatives, including paying for baggage screeners, air marshals, bomb-detection devices, and other security measures.

When the security tax was first implemented in February 2002, domestic airlines complained that they were forced to lower their fares by the same amount to avoid alienating cost-conscious travelers. In response, Congress more than one year later temporarily suspended the fee for the 2003 summer travel season as part of a \$3 billion emergency relief package for the industry. However, airlines raised fares by \$5 each way, effectively keeping prices paid by consumers stable, while the airlines pocketed the extra revenue.



Rental Car Taxes, Fees Continue to Increase at Airports

Agencies can also expect to pay more for travelers to rent cars while traveling. According to *Business Travel News*, states, municipalities, and airports are all targeting additional car rental taxes and fees as a way to address budget shortfalls. Sales tax increases, higher airport concession fees, and new visitor taxes are the trend in many localities.

The newest fees are a tripling of the vehicle licensee fee, which is passed on to consumers in California as of October 1; a 10 percent car rental tax in Alaska, which goes into effect January 1; and a \$2 a day car rental tax in New Jersey, which was implemented last year. In addition, a 2 percent car rental tax is being considered in several Nevada counties to fund such things as a minor league baseball stadium, a performing arts center, and a culinary school.

Other types of increases include sales tax increase, a highway tax increase, additional airport concession fees, and new airport fees. Collectively, these taxes and surcharges could potentially boost the cost of a rental car by 30 percent or more in some localities.

For example, at Boston Logan Airport renters pay 18.6 percent in taxes, plus \$10 per rental fee; at Dallas-Fort Worth, they pay a 26.11 percent tax, plus a \$5 to \$7 per day fee, which is a combination of the vehicle license fee and airport surcharge; at Phoenix, they pay 29.46 percent in tax, plus a \$3.25 per day airport fee; in San Francisco they pay 8.25 percent in tax, plus a \$12 per rental airport transportation fee. ➔